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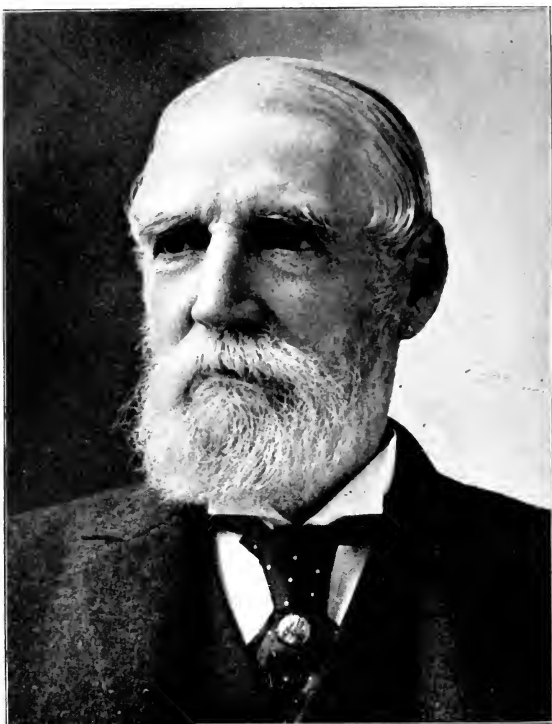


## **Editorials and Resolutions**

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SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY

**Editorials  
and  
Resolutions**

IN  
MEMORY OF

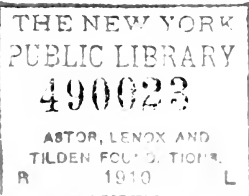
**SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY**

BORN MARCH 17TH, 1822

DIED AUGUST 11TH, 1904

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NEW YORK  
PRIVATELY PRINTED  
MCMV



## **Editorials and Resolutions**





## Editorials and Resolutions

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### A PUBLIC-SPIRITED MERCHANT

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THE full extent of the late S. P. Avery's usefulness may never be known. Conspicuous as his position here in New York was, he gave modestly from the surplus of his collections to many country institutions, ever fostering the love of art in its feeble beginnings. When one recalls that his considerable wealth was made in the sale of pictures, it is remarkable how true his professional conscience remained to his personal taste. The humbug that so often surrounds picture-dealing he was incapable of practising; he would no more have thought of following the more permissible methods of puffery than of practising the baser exploitations of the artist and the public.

To the art dealer who is also a true amateur of the beautiful there must be a constant tragedy in the thought of the beautiful things that have passed—if profitably—out of his hands. Unlike his colleagues, Mr. Avery was permitted to build

something like a permanent monument to his taste through his fortunate association with the late W. H. Vanderbilt. With an uncommon humility Mr. Vanderbilt interposed between himself and the importunities of the commercial world of art the trained skill of Mr. Avery. What is still called *par excellence* the Vanderbilt collection represents, in the main, what Mr. Avery would have done a generation ago had he been collecting for himself. The greater part of these pictures are now loaned to the Metropolitan Museum, and every one may judge how carefully Mr. Avery executed that trust. There hangs *Les Gorges d'Aprémont* of Rousseau—perhaps the most impressive landscape ever painted; *The Sower* of Millet, Diaz in all his modes, besides admirable examples of Couture, Meissonier, Alfred Stevens, and the military painters. Taste has changed in a generation; the brilliant and somewhat metallic qualities of Fortuny, Villegas, and Zamaçois are now depreciated, yet no one can say as he runs over the collection that the examples are not the best of their kind, nor deny that it has a permanent artistic value. "I never have seen so many good bad pictures in my life," said a connoisseur who dislikes the art of the Institute. That was a handsome compliment to a discernment that always contrived to find the grain of art in the desert of its academic counterfeits.

We have dwelt somewhat at length on this professional phase of Mr. Avery's activity because

it shows how little compromise the connoisseur ever made with the picture dealer, and because it illustrates that the element of personality was as strongly felt in the business man as it was later in the gentleman of refined leisure. The Avery Architectural Library at Columbia University, which was founded in memory of Mr. Avery's architect son, and chosen and catalogued in the most careful manner by the donor himself, was naturally the benefaction nearest to his heart. He made its enlargement a personal care, and found a librarian most inventive in devising helps and conveniences for the student. Every year this gift becomes more valuable. Hardly less a service to the cause of art was that of starting a print department of the New York Public Library. To this cause Mr. Avery gave the large collection of nineteenth-century etchings which he had been accumulating for forty years, and to the day of his death he made it a pleasure to add rare specimens or to fill gaps in the portfolios. By this one donation the new department gained importance in the world of art—a reputation that subsequent gifts, prompted, no doubt, by Mr. Avery's initiative, have further enhanced.

In both these cases Mr. Avery gave far more than the money represented by the foundation; the experience he had won as an art dealer was in both cases the essential feature of the benefaction. This perhaps is the pleasantest feature of his remarkable career—that it would be quite

impossible to say just where should be drawn the dividing line between his personal interests and public services. He never presented the somewhat pathetic spectacle of the man of great riches who brings money only, but no personal idea as to its proper spending. In all his association, as trustee, with the Metropolitan Museum he loved to think out and arrange personally the little collections which he gave or lent. In fact, he was, for a philanthropist, individual almost to excess; more set upon carrying out the many plans that came to him than eager to associate himself actively with the hundred and one organizations that make for art. Even so, this aloofness was not invariably successful (The Grolier Club managed to make him their president); but it cost him something of public appreciation as it spared him much talk and nonsense that would have been distasteful to him.

His long and honorable career seems to us peculiarly exemplary because of the dignity with which he filled public positions, and more especially because of the ease with which he turned from his business to public service. There is often a feeling that philanthropy of whatever sort is a formidable occupation. This is so only because benevolent people often rush ill-advisedly into causes which their regular pursuits least fit them to understand. Mr. Avery's discriminating use of his own special abilities may well remind us all that we are responsible only for our own talents,

but for those strictly; and that a willing heart is all the better for being backed up by a wise head.

—New York Evening Post, August 13, 1904.

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SAMUEL P. AVERY, who is dead at a ripe age, was one of those men, more plentiful in a world much accused of sordidness than the world knows, who do good without employing a press agent to state the fact. Beginning life as an engraver, he naturally acquired an interest in art, and became one of the best known dealers in pictures in the metropolis. It was to his encouragement that many of the American as well as not a few of the foreign artists owed their success. The various societies organized for sales and exhibitions, and the various schools established for the teaching of art in all its branches, had his quiet but effective and monetary support. At the time of his death he was a member of seven of these societies, and was a patron of most of the schools. But his usefulness and his generosity extended beyond his chosen field. He was a trustee of three public libraries, a founder of the Metropolitan Museum, a veteran of the army, a giver to charities, he endowed several free beds in hospitals, he took a part in educational work in the South, and in measures designed to protect and enlighten the Indian, he created the library in the Teachers College, and made and endowed the library of architecture in Columbia University which gave

to him the degree of master of arts. To the Lenox Library he gave his remarkable collection of prints and examples of lithography, illustrating that art in its completeness, these gifts numbering over 17,000. Withal he was not a remarkably rich man, and he never put himself on exhibition when a service was to be done for the community, although he was one who could be counted upon to do more than his share of it. His memory is held in love and reverence by the whole body of painters, sculptors, architects and medalists, whom he assisted, and by the educators of the country. He set an example worthy to be kept before those who have either wealth or talent to devote to the public interest.

—Brooklyn Eagle, August 13, 1904.

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THE death of Samuel P. Avery recalls the fact that great wealth is not necessary to a man who has the desire to benefit the world provided he has understanding. Because he was an engraver by profession and a connoisseur by taste and training he had the knowledge required to make collections at comparatively small cost, and some of these he placed where they can be cared for and seen. The Lenox Library has certain portfolios containing the etched work of Flameng, for instance, in more complete form than it can be found in Paris, because Avery recognized Flameng's ability at an early date and quietly secured the largest num-

ber of proofs. Other etchers and engravers were followed in their careers with the same diligence, and the Lenox has the completest record of their art. And while these collections were made before the artists had been "boomed" by the demand from the generality of collectors, Mr. Avery had the good sense to make his gifts at once, adding to them from time to time, strengthening and completing them, so that they were of service to the art-loving public during his life and were not left to be dealt out by his executors as bequests, thus entailing delays and sometimes the frustration of the purpose of the donor.

The various art organizations and clubs to which Mr. Avery belonged will miss his ready sympathy and some of them his counsel. He was a diplomat in his way, though he could not and did not escape some of the conflicts that spring from differing views of art and the dogmatic methods that grow on men with age. He had to step warily among the artists and collectors—kittle cattle if ever there were any! All the old misunderstandings and rancours are swept away by death and the good works Mr. Avery did remain to honor his memory.

—New York Times, August 14, 1904.

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THE late Samuel Putnam Avery lived a useful life, and he will be widely regretted at once as a personality and as an influence for good in the artistic development

of the city. Forty years ago, when he entered the picture market, the conditions of æsthetic taste in America were decidedly mixed. The sentimental or humorous anecdote, painted by the mediocre artist, was quite as likely to appeal to the collector as was any masterpiece of modern art. Mr. Avery was a man of common sense, and so did not try to make things over in a day; besides, he knew, what we are sometimes disposed to forget, that even the painted anecdote can be, on occasion, a masterpiece. But he had an instinctive feeling for what was best in contemporary art; he realized from the outset the value of the Barbizon school, for example, and he was of great service to us in bringing really good pictures into the country. More than one noted gallery in New York owes its excellence to his share in its creation.

On his visits to Europe in earlier days he established friendly relations with scores of artists since become famous. He was among their first as he was among their most discerning patrons, and as a result there passed through his hands or remained in his possession some of the rarest and most characteristic productions of his time. He had a gift for discovering the unique picture or print, the most interesting personal souvenir. Ranging far outside the boundaries of pictorial art, he swelled the list of his acquisitions with beautiful bindings, porcelains, and divers objects of artistic craftsmanship. These treasures he often lent for exhibition purposes, and finally,



in the leisure of his later life, bestowed upon different institutions, so that while at the time of his death he left his home still full of beautiful things, he had made in one direction or another a remarkable number of important gifts. His collection of etchings, including a wonderful array of Whistlers, went to enrich the print department of the New York Public Library. Again and again it has furnished forth a notable exhibition at the Lenox Library Building. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, which he helped to found and which he faithfully served as a trustee, also profited by his generosity.

But the extent to which Mr. Avery benefited the many artistic organizations with which he was identified has already been noted in *The Tribune*. What we wish especially to point out to-day is the fact that in matters of art he was as cultivated as he was open-handed. He exerted a salutary influence not simply because he was ever ready to give practical support to an enlightened movement, but because he reinforced his more tangible contributions with the counsel that comes from taste and judgment. A good citizen who was also a connoisseur has been lost in his death.

—New York Tribune, August 14, 1904.

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**S**AMUEL PUTNAM AVERY died last week. He was a great art lover. New York City owes to him a library, prints, medals, the perpetual example of his public spirit. He

was eighty-two years of age and had retained a youthful interest in all things, which makes his loss more cruel.

Those who knew him know that his kindness was refined, his benevolence ingenious and that he gave gracefulness to his cordiality. He had been ill for a long time, but he retained of his years of strength an amiable air and the gift of pleasing. He was at the Architectural League's dinners in the Spring enthusiastic about all questions of art.

They had always interested him passionately. He was an engraver on copper and on wood until 1867. A book on the Chevalier Bayard, which Harper & Brothers published, is valuable as a relic of his days of handicraft. It is illustrated with his woodcuts. He was appointed, in 1867, American Commissioner to the Paris World's Fair, and returned to New York a picture dealer.

Edmund Clarence Stedman wrote a poem on this picture dealer. He wanted to make pictures rather than to sell them, but he had not time.

Artists were grateful to Mr. Avery and made of his house a museum. It has paintings, statues, bronzes, autographs, books in artistic bindings of immense value. His pleasure was to make them easily accessible to all students. He founded in memory of his son, Henry Ogden Avery, who died while a student of architecture at Paris, the Avery Architectural Library of Columbia University. It is excellent. There are the rarest books on

architecture that one may wish to consult, and all standard works. Regarding architecture as the basis of all the arts, Mr. Avery made the collection to include all the books on painting, sculpture and ornament that he could find.

His interest in the library was incessant. His desk was always covered with catalogues of old and new works on art which he compared with his list of the library at Columbia. What this lacked had to be obtained. The library, endowed in 1891, had in six years all the books that the cataloguers could suggest to him, and then he made another extravagant gift.

He gave to the New York Public Library—Tilden, Lenox and Astor foundations—his collection of prints. It is formed of etchings of the master painters, and it contains proof impressions which are not in the Louvre nor in the Bibliothèque Nationale. The Avery Print Collection has twice as many proofs of works of Flameng and Jacque as Paris has, and works of Daubigny which are not known there to exist. Mr. Avery got them from the artists themselves and from their printer. He gave medals to The Grolier Club, art objects to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, books and prints to numerous public institutions.

A gold medal struck in honor of his seventy-fifth birthday was presented to him by a group of citizens. He accepted it with astonishment, thinking it odd that he should be honored for having done the things that gave to him the great-

est pleasure. He had in his sentiments all the delicacies of his artistic taste.

—Henri Pène Dubois, in *Chicago Examiner*, August 18, 1904.

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## THE BIBLIOPHILE

THE vagaries and habits of the collector are legion, while his motives are as varied as his habits. Some men collect books for investment, resell their libraries, and gloat over the profits; others buy purely with the idea of reading, while again some have the dual motive of pleasure in reading rare books and of a shrewd investment. To none of these classes did the late Mr. Samuel P. Avery belong. He was a collector primarily for his own pleasure and delectation, and secondarily for the purpose of doing good to those to whom he was a benefactor and of helping those from whom he was a purchaser. He was that *rara avis*, an altruistic collector.

Mr. Avery began life as an engraver on copper, and early had his attention drawn to the artistic and mechanical part of book-making. He was once employed by a bank note company. It was natural, therefore, that all through his career he should be an ardent admirer as well as collector of specimens of fine book-making, as regards type, illustration, and general format.

Mr. Avery also practised wood engraving, and became very skilful at his art. He compiled and

illustrated several volumes of humorous quality, and those who knew him soon discovered that he possessed a keen sense of humor. It was a matter of course that when The Grolier Club was founded in 1884 Mr. Avery should take a deep interest in its object and work, and all through his career he was a constant attendant at its meetings, working on important committees, besides serving the club as its president. It is said that his record for attendance at the monthly members' meetings exceeded that of any other member of this well-known organization. Not only was his interest manifested by the giving of his time, but Mr. Avery early began to present the library of the club with books, engravings, bindings, etc. As a collector Mr. Avery was most discriminating and careful in his buying, and early formed one of the best collections of bookbindings, as a fine art, ever made in this country.

Every institution in this country with which he was directly associated, and many which had no possible claim upon him, were enriched by his gifts. To the Avery Architectural Library he gave his very complete collection of books on fine bindings, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art was a frequent recipient of books of interest, particularly those relating to etchings, engravings, and the allied arts. Even remote college libraries received unsolicited gifts, generally relating to the arts and crafts.

It is said by one of Mr. Avery's most intimate

friends that his library at the time of his death was not a large one, because he was such a constant giver of books. It represented only the undistributed remnant.

The Bibliophile has been in some of Mr. Avery's haunts in Paris and London, and wherever he was a familiar figure the verdict was the same; namely, that he was a most well-informed, modest, courteous, kindly gentleman of the old school whose object seemed to rather give than to get. One phase of his kindness will long be remembered by men greatly his junior. He never seemed to look down upon them, but always treated them as possessing great possibilities, and many a kind word spoken to a young engraver or bookbinder was followed by a substantial order. Mr. Avery did not do like some collectors, wait until the fame of an artisan or artist was established and his name on every one's lips, and then to seek his wares, but he early recognized merit and took an especial pride in being among the first to order the work of new men.

Mr. William Matthews, the first American binder who gained standing as a master, was a life-long friend of Mr. Avery's, and the Bibliophile well remembers watching Mr. Avery at the sale of Mr. Matthews's library some years ago, securing books which had formed the subject of their united taste, and many hours of discussion.

Of bookplates, he used three, if not more; one engraved by the English master, C. W. Sherborn,

one made for the Avery Architectural Library, one engraved by French, forming No. 10 in Mr. Lemperly's check list. This was made in memory of his daughter, Miss Ellen Walters Avery, whose library was presented by her father to the Teachers College, and is dated March 25, 1893. It is one of the most successful of Mr. French's creations. The design represents a lyre, telescope, daisies, etc., worked into an elaborate border, while an open book of music, an astronomy, a natural history, a church history, a volume of poems, and the "Imitation of Christ" are set in an artistic group, evidently representing the tastes of his daughter.

Mr. Avery was a delightful letter writer, and something of a punster, while he prided himself on saying all he had to say on a given subject in the briefest possible way. His notelets became famous, and a friend of the Bibliophile has told of many such being preserved by him because they were too clever and quaintly humorous to throw away.

One can see him now seated at his desk in his library (which was in the front room of the second story of his house), opening his morning mail from correspondents almost all over the globe, giving advice here, ordering books there, writing kindly notes to various people who were discouraged about their failures, and always preserving the equipoise and kindness which were so characteristic of himself in all that he wrote. His letters,

if published, would form a charming chronicle of art, life, and thought in New York for the last fifty years.

—Evening Post, August 27, 1904.

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FEW men outside the library profession have been of more service in the library world than the late Samuel Putnam Avery, trustee of the New York Public Library and a helpful friend and benefactor of many other libraries as well. He brought to the service of his own library board a remarkable and unusual combination of breadth of mind and sympathy, with specific art knowledge, and that library owes to him the initiative or the reshaping of some of its most important collections. Active into the ninth decade of his well-filled life, Mr. Avery's services to the community increased with experience instead of decreasing with age, and as many public institutions as private friends will sorrow for the loss of his ever-generous beneficence and sympathy.

—Library Journal, September, 1904.

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PROMINENT picture buyers and art connoisseurs of this city are expressing deep regret over the death of Samuel P. Avery of New York. They say they will greatly miss his annual visits to this city, and his kindly, gentle presence among them.

On account of his connection with the various



Colonial societies Mr. Avery had a large acquaintance in Washington, and he always received a warm welcome when he visited here. In speaking of it to-day a well-known artist said:

"I always regarded Samuel P. Avery as the greatest critic in this country. He not only knew pictures thoroughly, but he was an authority on Oriental pottery, old silver, old books and engravings. He was generous to a fault, and, as you know, presented the Metropolitan Museum with some of its most valued treasures. Mr. Avery has always been regarded as the man who introduced the paintings of the masters of the Barbizon school to America. Years ago at Mr. Avery's suggestion, men like John Taylor Johnston bought Corots for a few hundred dollars that are to-day worth many thousands. Of recent years Mr. Avery lived quietly, spending his mornings at his home among his books and art treasures, and his evenings at the New York Union League Club. He made frequent visits to Washington and possessed a number of most valuable old prints and engravings, showing the capital in the early days of its history. Mr. Avery delighted to encourage American art and many a young American artist has been helped by his advice as well as having been financially assisted. I am told that he left no written record of his life. This is deeply to be deplored, because an autobiography of him would have been invaluable to the art and literary world. Among other

things he possessed an album of pictures and autographs of prominent painters and collectors. Meissonier, Rousseau, Corot, and other artists now famed the world over, not only wrote their names in this book, but added some words showing their love and esteem for the American critic. In almost every instance they drew or painted some little sketch above their names. This makes this autograph album one of the most unique of its kind in the world, and its contents ought to be reproduced. But Mr. Avery was a most modest man. He cared little for notoriety and never would allow anything to be written about him or his album during his lifetime, and I understand he left no written record behind him."

—Brooklyn Eagle, September 7, 1904.

OF the large class of those who are interested in art, but not actively engaged in artistic production, it is doubtful if any one person has had as great or as sane and helpful an influence upon the art of America as Samuel Putnam Avery, who died at his residence in New York City, on Thursday, August 11th. Trained as an engraver, and giving early proof of remarkable taste and skill, he abandoned active artistic life for commerce in the production of others, but brought to the new field the natural refinement and the delicacy of imagination which would have secured for him great distinction in his original profession. His

business methods were always clever and often brilliant; but his most intense activity was uniformly guided by a natural appreciation of beauty and fine workmanship. Boldness in action and perfect taste—these always characterized his business career. The people of New York—and perhaps it is not too much to say the American people—appreciated these qualities, and were glad to make large returns for the faithful and expert service which he so constantly rendered.

When in the course of a long and happy life Mr. Avery reached an age which made active endeavor burdensome and unnecessary, he brought to the disposal of his accumulations the same qualities which had created them. Boundless courage and great knowledge, and an alertness which made him ready for any emergency—to these were added that extraordinary delicacy and tenderness of temperament which made him not only a great critic and connoisseur, but a dear friend as well.

It is doubtful if there is a worthy charity or a well-managed public institution in the City of New York which has not felt in a material way the benefit of his good will. Of these, however, the Library of Columbia University has been most kindly cared for.

The Avery Architectural Library is a most characteristic production of Mr. Avery's genius. The profession of architecture is peculiarly dependent upon its literature. At the same time

the cost of the best architectural books places them beyond the reach of many serious practitioners. This became apparent to Mr. and Mrs. Avery during the short practice of their son, Henry Ogden Avery, perhaps the most brilliant and promising of the younger architects of his day—who had gathered for his own use a remarkably valuable collection of books. At the death of their son there came to his parents the thought of the endowment of a monumental architectural library, as a suitable memorial; a library which should be easily accessible to all interested persons. Having made this decision, Mr. and Mrs. Avery, quite as a matter of course, placed their great resources in commission with a liberality which has known no limit except their own good judgment and that of the purchasing committee created by the foundation.

To this library and this work Mr. Avery has always given most freely of that which after all has been most enriching and most valuable—himself. His very last message concerned a gift, under date of August 5—and he then wrote with trembling hand, “I am a much sicker man than you may imagine,” though every other word was cheerful and hopeful. To the very last his interest never flagged, and his generous heart beat strong and true in spite of a keen consciousness of failing physical powers.

On the afternoon of the 14th, simple yet impressive services were held at the family residence, at

which in spite of the midsummer and vacation season the University was well represented.

More enduring than on bronze or marble, is the inscription which he has written by his life on the hearts of his fellow citizens.

—Columbia University Quarterly, September, 1904.

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**B**Y advices just received from America we learn with regret of the death of Mr. Samuel Putnam Avery, who for many years has been a member of the Ex Libris Society. The New York *Evening Post* of August 13, 1904, gave a lengthy obituary notice of Mr. Avery, and a most appreciative article.

The late Mr. Avery was a native of New York, where he was born in 1822. He started in life as an engraver, then set up business as an engraver, art publisher, and dealer in oil paintings and water-colors. In 1867 he was appointed Commissioner to the Paris Universal Exhibition for the American Art Department, and in the following year he opened an art gallery in New York, where for twenty years he dealt in foreign and domestic art. In 1885 he retired from business, and was succeeded by his son, S. P. Avery, Jr.

Mr. Avery was active in many public enterprises, especially those relating to the fine arts. For a long time he was secretary of the Art Committee of the Union League Club, whose efforts led to the formation of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, of which Mr. Avery became one of the

founders and trustees. He was one of the original committee for the erection of the Bartholdi Statue of Liberty in the harbor of New York. He was also a trustee of the New York Public Library; president of the Grolier Club; vice-president of the Sculpture Society; honorary member of the Architectural League, and of the Typothetæ Society; besides being a member of numerous other societies. One of the collections of Oriental porcelain in the Metropolitan Museum was founded by Mr. Avery, and in 1891 the Avery Architectural Library of about 18,000 volumes was established at Columbia College, and endowed by Mr. and Mrs. Avery in memory of a dead son. In memory of a daughter, in 1893, he established a library in Teachers' College. In 1896 Columbia College conferred upon him the degree of Master of Arts. In March, 1897, on the occasion of his seventy-fifth birthday, a gold medal was presented to him by seventy-five citizens of the city, in recognition of his many public services. Mr. Avery presented to the New York Public Library a large and valuable collection of prints, numbering about 17,000, which he had collected in the course of more than thirty years.

Such is a brief epitome of the career of this public-spirited man, who has lately passed from amongst us in the autumn of his days.

As a collector Mr. Avery was most discriminating and careful in his buying, and early formed one of the best collections of book-bindings, as a fine

## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

art, ever made in America. Of book-plates, he used three, if not more; one engraved by the English master, Mr. C. W. Sherborn; another designed for the Avery Architectural Library; and one engraved by Mr. Edwin Davis French. This was made in memory of his daughter, Miss Ellen Walters Avery, whose library was presented, as mentioned above, to the Teachers' College in 1893. It is one of the most successful of Mr. French's creations. The design represents a lyre, telescope, daisies, etc., worked into an elaborate border, while an open book of music, an astronomy, a natural history, a church history, a volume of poems, and the "Imitation of Christ" are set in an artistic group, evidently representing the tastes of his daughter.

Mr. E. D. French writes: "Mr. Avery's death has caused deep sorrow among his many friends: he was one of the first to encourage me in my book-plate work, and has always been a good friend to me."

—Ex-Libris Society, Journal, London, September, 1904.

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### TWENTY-THIRD REGIMENT

#### ARMORY

#### BROOKLYN, N. Y.

WHEREAS, it has pleased a Divine Providence to call to his rest, on the 11th day of August, 1904, our friend and comrade SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY, who has been a member of the Veteran Association of Co.

SAMUEL P. AVERY

B, Twenty-third Regiment, N. G. N. Y. since its inception, as well as one of the original signers in the active Company.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Veterans and Ex-members Association of Co. B, do sincerely mourn the loss of our old tried friend, whose interest in his old organization has never flagged, and whose memory we shall ever hold green.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, That we respectfully tender our sincere sympathy to the family of our dear comrade, and that a copy of these resolutions be suitably engrossed and forwarded to them.

F. B. BECKWITH,	JOHN HAGEN,
Secretary.	President.

August 18th, 1904.

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TWENTY-THIRD REGIMENT  
ARMORY  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

WHEREAS, Almighty God in His wisdom has called to himself our former comrade SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY, and WHEREAS, SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY was a charter member of Co. B, Twenty-third Regiment, N. G. N. Y., enlisting January 21st, 1862, and honorably discharged April 1st, 1867, has since



## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

then, in every way, shown a keen interest in our welfare, being ready at all times, to lend his support, both morally and financially, to Old B:

THEREFORE, at a special meeting, held at the Armory, it was unanimously

RESOLVED, That this Company mourns the loss of a true and tried friend and comrade, and tenders its heartfelt sympathy to the family of the departed.

JNO. D. A. ONDERDONK,  
Captain and President.

WILLIAM M. REID,  
Secretary.

August 22d, 1904.

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### SOCIETY OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY ARCHITECTS

RESOLVED, That in the lamented death of SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY, the Society of Columbia University mourns the loss of one who labored long and successfully for the enlightenment of his fellow men, and that the Society hereby expresses its grateful appreciation of his admirable accomplishments in the field of art, and of his notable contribution to the advancement of the Art of Architecture through the foundation and endowment of the Avery Architectural Library of Columbia University.

SAMUEL P. AVERY

RESOLVED, That the Society extends to his family its sympathy in their bereavement.

RESOLVED, That these resolutions be inscribed upon the minutes of this Society, and that a copy thereof be sent to his family.

HARRY ELLINGWOOD DONNELL,

J. WILLIAM CROMWELL, JR.

Committee.

By Order of

ARTHUR A. STOUGHTON,

President.

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GREENWICH HOUSE

26 JONES STREET

NEW YORK

SAMUEL P. AVERY was a life member of the Co-operative Social Settlement Society. His name became associated with its work as with so many other humanitarian movements because of his acute interest in all that tends to broaden, deepen, strengthen and sweeten the healthful life current of the community. Able, wise, competent, gentle and modest, he was the type of the useful private citizen. The managers of this Society appreciate the loss which they and this City, which was his home, have sustained through his death, and heartily acknowledge that they and their work were honored by his co-operation in it.

September 28, 1904.

## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

### CIVIL SERVICE REFORM ASSOCIATION

WHEREAS, SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY, a member of this committee since 1895, and of the Association since 1882, died on August 11, 1904, and

WHEREAS, We recognize that he had not only been a loyal supporter of the cause for the promotion of which this Association was formed, and a liberal contributor of funds for the carrying on of its work, but that as an artist he was well known and as a patron of the arts was distinguished; further, that he had taken an intelligent and active interest in public questions generally seeking to bring his influence to bear in lifting the consideration of such matters to a higher plane, that though he rarely spoke in public, his influence was so exerted that it tended to promote the public welfare; that he was optimistic, in that he believed matters of "political housekeeping" were susceptible of improvement: that he was sympathetic, especially with the aspirations and strivings of the young, and when he gave to Columbia University, the valuable Avery Library, it was, that both old and young, but especially the young men and women, and the alumni who had not long ceased to be resident there, might have close at hand the means by which they could investigate more deeply the arts and architecture of an earlier time: that he was a philanthropist in

SAMUEL P. AVERY

a very genuine sense, who had taken to heart and applied the saying of George Sand's Jacques, that there is but one virtue, the eternal sacrifice of one's self; therefore,

RESOLVED, That this Executive Committee consider it a privilege to place on its records and directs that it be so placed, this minute indicative of its appreciation of the quiet and unassuming but generous and fruitful life which Mr. Avery led, and the high purposes by which his career always seemed to be actuated.

Adopted by the Executive Committee of the Civil Service Reform Association of New York at a meeting held September 28, 1904.

Attest:

ELLIOTT H. GOODWIN,  
Secretary.

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**M**INUTE adopted by the council of The Grolier Club at its first meeting in the fall of 1904.

THE COUNCIL  
OF  
THE GROLIER CLUB

expresses its deep sorrow at the death, on August eleventh, nineteen hundred and four of

SAMUEL P. AVERY

one of its members, and directs that the following be recorded on its

## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

### MINUTES

and a copy sent to his family.

Among the many organizations in which

#### SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY

took a lively interest and which became consequently objects of his bounty, there was probably none nearer to his heart than

#### THE GROLIER CLUB

Already devoted to the purposes for which the Club was formed, he was early enrolled among its members and from the first was actively concerned in its welfare.

A member of the Council from 1888 to the day of his death, he was always faithful in attendance at its meetings, and equally conscientious and unwearied in his work on the various committees of which he was from time to time a member.

His zeal found a congenial and special field in the Club Library, of which

#### HE BECAME A CONSTANT AND CHIEF BENEFACTOR

enriching it not only with many valuable books relating to the art of printing, but with a fine representative collection of bindings, and a comprehensive collection of notable medals.

#### AS CHAIRMAN OF THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE

he watched over the interests of the library to

SAMUEL P. AVERY

the last, still adding to its treasures with an intimate and thorough knowledge of its needs.

The Club exhibitions whether of books or bindings or prints, invariably drew from his collections and were sometimes almost wholly made up from those rich sources, and after his matchless collection of modern prints passed to the

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

through his generosity the request accompanying the gift that loans be made from time to time to

THE GROLIER CLUB  
HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY  
HONORED

At the social meetings of the Club which he seldom missed, Mr. Avery's presence was felt as

A JOYOUS, SYMPATHETIC  
AND REFINING INFLUENCE

His occasional absence was always the cause of anxious inquiry, which deepened into grave concern during the earlier months of the year of his death. During the four years of Mr. Avery's presidency, the Club reached

AS HIGH A DEGREE OF  
PROSPERITY AS IT HAS EVER KNOWN

The limit of membership was reached, the library assumed a new importance, the Club pub-

## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

lications were highly successful, and the mortgage on the Club house was paid off. It has been felt that the Club would be doing well so long as it could maintain the position which was then reached.

In their long intercourse with Mr. Avery his fellow members on the Council of the Club have always had the highest regard for his simplicity of character and singleness of purpose, a great admiration for his range of interests and knowledge, a deep appreciation of his thoughtfulness and generosity, and a constantly growing affection for the courteous gentleman that he was.

In his death they have suffered peculiar personal loss, and they now place on record this tribute to his worth in the Club and his life among them, out of regard to what is due to him, and by way of expression of their sincere regret that such a life and work are ended, in order to convey

### THEIR DEEP SYMPATHY

to those who within the ties of relationship were nearer to their friend.

While thus endeavoring to

### HONOR THE MEMORY OF

Mr. Avery as a member of The Grolier Club, the members of the Council are not unmindful of the wide sphere of his labors and usefulness in other directions of private activity, and in various phases

SAMUEL P. AVERY

of civic life in recognition of which they join their  
fellow citizens in

APPRECIATION AND PRAISE

THEO. L. DE VINNE  
ROBERT HOE  
BEVERLY CHEW  
HOWARD MANSFIELD  
RICHARD H. LAWRENCE  
E. B. HOLDEN  
WALTER GILLISS  
B. W. PIERSON  
THOMAS G. EVANS  
CHAS. F. CHICHESTER  
EDWARD G. KENNEDY  
W. F. HAVEMEYER  
R. T. H. HALSEY  
ARTHUR H. SCRIBNER

New York, October 4, 1904.

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**M**INUTE of the Board of Managers of the  
Sons of the Revolution on the death of  
SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY  
Member of the  
Board of Managers  
of the  
SONS OF THE REVOLUTION  
in the  
STATE OF NEW YORK

Samuel Putnam Avery, art connoisseur and  
littérateur, was born in New York, March 17,



1822. He was educated at the public schools and early displayed a taste for art.

He started his life work as a letter engraver with a bank note company, but soon took up engraving on wood, being employed by Harper & Brothers, and other publishing houses.

Mr. Avery varied his labor by compiling, illustrating, and publishing books. He manifested a great interest in an American School of Art, and materially assisted its growth.

In 1867 he was appointed Commissioner in charge of the American Fine Art Department at the Paris Exhibition, by Secretary of State William H. Seward.

On his return to New York, the following year, he commenced to deal in art works, with which business he was connected for nearly a quarter of a century. He was also identified with the general progress of art throughout the United States.

His frequent visits abroad put him on intimate relations with celebrated European artists, and he was able to place many of their finest productions in American galleries.

In 1887 he retired from active business, and devoted himself to the various organizations with which he was connected.

Mr. Avery was secretary of that Committee of the Union League Club which called the meeting which resulted in the foundation of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1870, of which he later

became trustee and chairman of the Art Committee.

The Avery Architectural Library at Columbia College was founded by him in memory of his son, Henry Ogden Avery.

Mr. Avery was the author of articles on "Progress of the Fine Arts in New York during Fifty Years," in Lossing's History of New York.

He was trustee of the Lenox, Astor and Tilden libraries, and was one of the Committee for the erection of the Bartholdi Statue.

He was president of The Grolier Club, a Gentleman of the Council of the Society of Colonial Wars, and was prominent in very many other clubs and societies.

Mr. Avery became a life member of the Sons of the Revolution in 1894. In 1900 he was chosen a member of the Board of Managers, and remained a member until his death.

During all that time no member was more faithful in his attendance at meetings. He was nominated for the Vice Presidency last year, but could not be persuaded to accept. He always took a great interest in the work of the Society, and his gifts were many and valuable and unostentatiously made.

Mr. Avery left a widow, Mary Ogden Avery, who has joined in many of his benefactions, and one son, Samuel Putnam Avery, Jr., also a member of the Society, a daughter, Mrs. M. P. Welcher, and four grandchildren.

## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

The Board of Managers records its deep sorrow and the sorrow of every member of the Board in the loss of a valued counsellor, sincere friend, noble, unselfish and patriotic citizen.

The foregoing minute was adopted by the Board of Managers of the Sons of the Revolution in the State of New York, at a meeting held October 10, in the year nineteen hundred and four.

Attest:

EDMUND WETMORE,  
Acting President.

MORRIS PATTERSON FERRIS,  
Secretary.

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**M**INUTE adopted by The Architectural League at its first meeting in the fall of 1904:

WHEREAS, The Architectural League has suffered an irreparable loss in the death of its valued friend and Honorary Member Mr. SAMUEL P. AVERY, and

WHEREAS, The League recognizes that Mr. Avery was at all times ready to assist the League, not only by his advice, but by important contributions to its library, and that he had at heart the interests of the League, from its earliest days, and

WHEREAS, Mr. Avery's presence and encouragement was always of the greatest benefit and inspiration, and

SAMUEL P. AVERY

WHEREAS, The Architectural League of New York desires to add its appreciation of the great work done by Mr. Avery for the advancement of Architecture, as evinced by the Architectural Library given to Columbia University, and named after Henry O. Avery, one of its earliest and valued members, Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Architectural League of New York, respectfully offers its sincere condolence to the family of our late member, and begs to present this evidence of its esteem and sympathy at the time of their great sorrow.

ARNOLD W. BRUNNER,  
President.

FRANK E. WALLS,  
Secretary.

New York, October 25, 1904.

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SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY

HONORARY MEMBER, A. I. A.

THE American Institute of Architects, and a large number of leading men and women of every calling, here and in Europe, mourn the death, on the eleventh of August last, of a good man, a dear friend, and a most attractive personality. To the architects of America especially is Mr. Avery's death a bereavement. He was an Honorary Member of the American Institute, and in many ways deserved, as much as a layman can, the esteem and gratitude of the profession.

The accumulation of wealth was little in Mr. Avery's mind when he began his career. His temperament called him more strongly toward the practice of art than toward commerce, even in artistic matters, but, doubtless, it was precisely this native delicacy and power of imagination which insured his success in business, when once the current of events had drawn him into that field of activity.

He was born in New York, March 17, 1822, and learned the art of engraving, as a boy, in the office of a bank-note company. He soon found employment among prominent publishers as an engraver on wood. His work in this field brought him into intimate relations with many artists, and developed that appreciation of the important and valuable qualities of art which became such a marked characteristic in later life. While still at work on his blocks he had made a good collection of pictures, and with this opened in 1865 an establishment at the corner of Broadway and Fourth street, in New York, where he combined his interests as an engraver and as a dealer in art matters. At this moment his long association with Mr. W. T. Walters of Baltimore was begun.

In 1867 the unusual power which Mr. Avery had shown as a connoisseur led to his appointment as director of the American Art Department at the Paris Exposition. This, of course, was his golden opportunity, and he reaped from it all the advantage which was possible. In his work in

Paris he was much assisted by Mr. Walters, and by another loyal friend whose name should always be associated with his, Mr. George A. Lucas, a West Point graduate, resident in Paris, after 1865. These three defenders of good taste and sound business stood side by side for mutual encouragement and advantage. Mr. Avery was often in London and Paris, was intimately acquainted with all artists of note, and knew the European market perfectly. Many struggling artists have been enabled to fulfill the promise of their talent through his early recognition and assistance.

There is not space here to recount all the brilliant *coups* which resulted in securing great masterpieces for important collections. When the Franco-Prussian war closed Mr. and Mrs. Avery were in London, and while the great palaces were still smoking these good people arrived in Paris. Just at that moment there were many collectors who were glad to dispose of their accumulations; a moment later the entire civilized world was pressing into the market from which it had been excluded for two years. Mr. Avery's splendid work in the formation of the Vanderbilt collection is well-known.

In his best days Mr. Avery was bold, courageous and brilliant; but, after all, the foundations of his success were perfect taste and absolute integrity. What he sold as first-class was first-class, and the buyer never had occasion to regret his purchase. Moreover, through all his fine achievements he

never lost sight of character and culture, which with him grew deeper and richer with succeeding years. He was interested in everything which deserved his attention, and loved everyone who was worth loving. Those who knew him in his last years can never forget the mellow delicacy which his temperament had acquired.

Mr. Avery's friends know with how much affection, almost reverence, he always mentioned the noble woman who shared his life after November 24, 1844, and whose name is also enrolled among the honorary members of the Institute; but the partnership was not personal merely, as so many are; it was Mr. and Mrs. Avery in all the stress and labor of life.

Most interesting to architects is that phase of Mr. Avery's activity and feeling which developed in connection with the life and death of his son Henry. Henry Ogden Avery, the second son, was born January 31, 1852. He came into an artistic inheritance, which was fully appreciated by an artistic temperament. Architecture especially appealed to him, and in 1870, he had the good fortune to enter the office of Mr. Russell Sturgis in New York. After spending two years under the influence of Mr. Sturgis, he passed to the atelier of Professor Jules André at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, whose deepest affection and esteem he won and held as a pupil for seven years, and as a friend to the end of his life. Mr. Henry Avery returned to New York in 1879, and entered the

office of Richard M. Hunt. After 1883 he practiced for himself. This is not the place for an account of the fine promise and unusual accomplishment of this excellent architect. One phase of his character concerns us especially: its breadth of culture, shown by his love of good books. He knew, as all architects of sound training know, that the past of architecture lives chiefly in its literature, and to fortify himself thoroughly he bought a considerable collection of the strong works which lie at the foundation of every good architectural library.

This valuable little collection was in Mr. Henry Avery's office when he died, April 30, 1890. It could not be sold, of course. To let it lie unused was equally impossible. Largely at the suggestion of Mr. Sturgis the books were transferred to the library of Columbia University and about them, as a nucleus, a complete architectural library has been formed.

The scheme of Mr. and Mrs. Avery for the Henry O. Avery Memorial Architectural Library was carefully considered and clearly defined. They assumed the point of view of the large-minded practising architect, whose interest covers a broad field, but a field which has, nevertheless, quite definite limitations. Within these limitations the founders have been willing to buy whatever has been needed; beyond these limitations they have not wished to go. To keep the boundaries intact and to prevent hasty, indiscriminate, or prejudiced



buying, they provided at the start that the selection of material should be placed in the hands of a committee of experts, the Librarian and the Professor of Architecture, in the University, and Mr. Russell Sturgis, who represents the architectural profession in general. The gifts and endowments were placed in the custody of Columbia University, in order to secure the interest and protection of its architectural department, but the library is intended for all architects, and its use is free to any serious student. Mr. and Mrs. Avery have also endowed the Henry O. Avery Prize at the Architectural League.

Mr. Avery's friends will be gratified to know that he is ably succeeded by his elder son, who bears his name and will foster loyally his many interests.

EDWARD R. SMITH,

Reference Librarian Avery Architectural Library.

—Quarterly Bulletin of the American Institute of Architects, October, 1904.

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SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY, life member of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, died August 11, 1904, at his residence in New York, aged eighty-two years. He was born March 17, 1822, in New York City, and was the eldest son of Samuel Putnam Avery and Hannah Ann Parke, daughter of Capt. Benjamin Parke of New York. His father, who was in the leather business in New York, and died there in the cholera epidemic of

1832, when only thirty-five years of age, was the son of John William Avery and Sarah Fairchild, both of Stratford, Conn., and grandson of the Rev. Ephraim Avery, rector of Grace Church, Rye, N. Y., by his wife Hannah Platt (or Pratt). Rev. Ephraim Avery was the son of Rev. Ephraim Avery of Brooklyn, Conn., by his wife Deborah Lathrop, daughter of Samuel and Deborah (Crow) Lathrop of Pomfret, Conn.; who was the son of Rev. John Avery of Truro, Mass., and Ruth Little, daughter of Ephraim and Mary (Sturdevant) Little of Marshfield, Mass., and granddaughter of Thomas Little of Plymouth, Mass., by his wife Ann, daughter of Mr. Richard Warren the *Mayflower* pilgrim; who was the son of Robert Avery of Dedham, Mass., and Elizabeth Lane, daughter of Job and Sarah Lane of Malden, Mass.; who was the son of Dr. William Avery who came from Barkham, Co. Berks, England, to Dedham, Mass., about 1650.

Left by the death of his father at the early age of ten to make his own way in the world, Mr. Avery began engraving as a mere boy in a bank note company where he studied copperplate engraving, then engraving on wood, and afterwards edited art compilations of his own selection, sometimes contributing illustrations of his own handiwork. In 1865 he entered into the business of commercial engraving and art publishing at the corner of Broadway and Fourth Street. In 1867 he received the appointment of Commissioner to

go to France in charge of the American Art Department at the Universal Exposition in Paris. The following year he abandoned engraving and art publishing and became a dealer in works of art. He removed to No. 88 Fifth Avenue where he opened a gallery and for nearly twenty years conducted a very successful business in paintings and water colors, both domestic and foreign, when he retired entirely from business and was succeeded by his son, Samuel P. Avery, Jr. During this latter period of business activity he became widely known as an art connoisseur and one of the foremost men in art circles in New York City. It was through his advice that several prominent collectors of pictures enriched their galleries with foreign paintings, notably the late William H. Vanderbilt and William T. Walters of Baltimore. The Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Museum placed much confidence in his taste and judgment and many of the romantic French landscapes and old Dutch paintings now in the Museum were selected by him.

Mr. Avery was for several years Secretary to the Art Committee of the Union League Club. This led to the organization of the Metropolitan Museum of Art of which he became one of the founders and a leading director. He held many other positions of honor, having been a Trustee of the New York Public Library, President of The Grolier Club, Vice-president of the Sculpture Society, and honorary member of the Architec-

tural League and of the Typothetæ Society. He was also one of the original committee for the erection of the Bartholdi Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor. The loss of his son, Henry Ogden Avery, a talented young architect, caused him to found in the Columbia University library the Avery collection of architectural and art books as a memorial. This contains more than fifteen thousand volumes and is probably the best special library of works on architecture in the country. For this Columbia gave him the honorary degree of Master of Arts. Nor were his benefactions confined to this University. He gave to the Lenox Library seventeen thousand nineteenth-century etchings and engravings, a collection which he had been accumulating for nearly forty years. The Grolier Club, of which he was President, and the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society, of which he was at one time a Trustee, were also recipients of valuable gifts, and one of the collections of Oriental porcelain in the Metropolitan Museum was collected and given by him. The New York Evening Post of August 13, 1904, in an editorial entitled "A Public-spirited Merchant," said of him: "The full extent of the late S. P. Avery's usefulness may never be known. Conspicuous as his position here in New York was, he gave modestly from the surplus of his collections to many country institutions, ever fostering the love of art in its feeble beginnings." In March, 1897, on the occasion of his seventy-

fifth birthday, a portrait medallion in gold was presented to him by seventy-five citizens of New York in recognition of his many public services.

Samuel Putnam Avery was married November 24, 1844, to Mary Ann Ogden, daughter of Henry Aaron Ogden and Katharine Conklin, both of New York. He is survived by his widow and two children: Samuel P. Avery, Jr., who until recently conducted the business founded by his father, and Mrs. Fannie F. Welcher, wife of the Rev. M. P. Welcher of Brooklyn. Benjamin Parke Avery, who was Minister to China under President Grant, and died in Pekin in 1875, was his only brother.

—New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, October, 1904.

## SAMUEL P. AVERY

BY S. OETTINGER

ON the 11th of August of the present year, there died here in New York, universally lamented, Samuel Putnam Avery, member of the Numismatic Society, the Nestor of the art-world of our city, at the advanced age of eighty-two years.

Founder and leading director of the Metropolitan Museum, Vice-president of the National Arts Club, founder of the Avery Library of Columbia, an active promoter of the New York Public Library, The Grolier Club, and other institutions, the deceased was one of those great

men, who, in this country as perhaps nowhere else, animated by true love of mankind and considering the mental development of their fellow-men, by the munificent renunciation of their fortunes won in pains and toil, set aside benefactions of inestimable value for public use, and thereby assure for themselves the thankful remembrance of all coming generations. Avery was born in New York, in 1822, and was originally an engraver on copper and wood, but later on he abandoned this profession and became a dealer in art objects. At his instigation and through his mediation, prominent collectors such as Vanderbilt, Walters and others enriched their galleries with the most famous works of the great painters of the present and the past. It was due to his influence that patriotically inclined collectors presented many a work of art to the Metropolitan Museum, which was thus enabled to elevate and purify the art feeling and taste of the public. Avery himself, twelve years ago, presented to the Metropolitan Museum a very valuable collection of three hundred medals and plaquets by the French medalists Roty and Chaplain, besides which he, together with his wife, offered each year, for the opening celebration of the Museum, valuable pictures, silver book-bindings and many costly presents, among which at one time three hundred antique silver spoons. To the Lenox Library Avery gave his rich collection of etchings and engravings, about seventeen

thousand pieces, the fruits of thirty years of activity as a collector. In memory of his son Henry, who died in the year 1890, and was a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, Avery and his wife founded the Architectural Library at Columbia University and gave an endowment fund; in memory of his third daughter Ellen, who died in 1893, he formed a library in the Teachers' College, and completed its book collection in a noteworthy manner. Avery was also an active promoter of the efforts in behalf of the education of negroes and Indians, endowed a number of beds in several hospitals, together with his wife, and took a wide active interest in charitable institutions in the whole country. A man of such extraordinary service to the public weal naturally stood high in the estimation of his fellow citizens, and it is therefore easily understood that my idea of honoring him by a medal with his portrait, found a lively approval on the part of his admirers. A subscription opened by me quickly brought in the means, from seventy-six friends of Avery, for realizing this idea, and by way of correspondence with our deceased Scharff in Vienna, I was able to make all necessary arrangements in order that the finely successful medal might be presented to the honored one on the 5th of May, 1897, for his seventy-fifth birthday. (The medal was described at the time by Herr Oberberggrat Ernst in No. 169 of the Monatsblatt.) Shortly before

Avery's decease, medalist Victor Brenner also dedicated to him an excellently designed medal "as a tribute of friendship" (so we are told by the inscription around the bust portrait), for to the fortunes of this artist the deceased (see *Monatsblatt* No. 253, August 1904) had also devoted an active interest. His death has called forth sad sympathy in the wide circle of those who were near to him in life, and in the many institutions of public utility which Avery had benefited in such rich measure. May the Numismatic Society also hold its deceased member in friendly remembrance.

—*Monatsblatt der Numismatischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, November, 1904.

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**A**T a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the People's Institute, held November 17, 1904, it was directed that a memorial of the late Samuel Putnam Avery, a member of the Advisory Council, be prepared and spread upon the minutes of the meeting. Such memorial is as follows:

"In the death of Samuel Putnam Avery, the People's Institute has lost a constant friend, long a member of its Advisory Council, who, by his sympathetic interest in its purposes and his generous contributions to its funds, has greatly aided the work of the Institute and encouraged the Trustees in their endeavors.

"The Trustees feel that the loss of such a man



## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

is an affliction to the entire community, which in all phases of civic needs received his sympathetic and discriminating aid.

“His memory remains as that of a high type of citizenship, and fully in accord with that belief in the people which is the animating spirit in the work of the Institute.

“Recognizing also Mr. Avery’s rare social qualities and his devotion to his family, the Trustees express their deep sympathy with those of his family who survive him, to whom they direct that a copy of this memorial be conveyed.”

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### THE TRUSTEES OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY ASTOR, LENOX AND TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
ASTOR LIBRARY BUILDING,  
40 LAFAYETTE PLACE.

NEW YORK, 18 November, 1904.

**A**T a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the New York Public Library (Astor, Lenox and Tilden foundations), held on November 9, 1904, the following minute was unanimously adopted:

“The Trustees of the New York Public Library have learned with deep regret of the death of

SAMUEL P. AVERY.

Mr. Avery had been for many years a trustee

of the Lenox Library, and became an original Trustee of the Public Library upon the consolidation in 1895, remaining such until his death.

"He was at all times a most zealous and useful member of the Board, who rendered conspicuous service from time to time during the negotiations for consolidation and afterwards upon the Executive Committee and the Art Committee.

"He was possessed of a truly liberal and public spirit. Prior to the consolidation he had established an Architectural library at Columbia University and in the same spirit was not only liberal in gifts of books to the Public Library, but in May, 1900, in order that a department of prints should be at once established on a permanent footing, presented to the library his entire collection of etchings, lithographs and photographs, numbering in all 17,577 pieces.

"This proved to be a most complete and valuable collection, representing the labor of his life, and tended at once to place the print collection of the Public Library, as far as relates to modern work, upon a firm foundation.

"In private life and in his daily intercourse, Mr. Avery was considerate and attractive, and the institution has lost by his death a munificent and cultivated benefactor and a valuable associate."

C. H. RUSSELL,  
Secretary.

JOHN BIGELOW,  
President.

## SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY

SINCE the death of Samuel Putnam Avery there have been obituary notices in many journals, including in their total mass a great many biographical notes which may be assumed to be generally truthful. The extreme interest which all lovers of the higher education must take in Mr. Avery's remarkable career have given these notices a peculiar value as showing how warm an interest could be taken in the man and his work by persons of widely different proclivities and associations.

I have been asked to furnish some reminiscences because my acquaintance with him began at a very early time, and has been continually renewed although not constantly kept up; and also because I had much to do with the foundation of the Avery Architectural Library, which is so peculiarly interesting to persons connected with this University.

I was taken by my old friend Peter B. Wight, the architect of the now destroyed building of the National Academy of Design, to see Mr. Avery at his Ann Street office; and at a later time I went to his Brooklyn home especially to see his curious collection of small paintings by the artists then most in favor among American picture-buyers. That must have been in 1864. Mr. Avery, as I knew him then, was a wood-engraver, but a letter from his son, the present Samuel Putnam Avery, tells me that there exist prints

from an engraving on metal by John Durand (brother of the well-known painter, Asher B. Durand), and that these prints bear the additional inscription: "This lettering put on by Saml. Avery, Oct. 1841." This print is the earliest work of his father which Mr. Avery is able to identify: but for a time there was work upon metal for the American Bank Note Company. I have no knowledge myself of Avery's work as a wood-engraver, and it would be highly interesting if information upon that subject could be obtained. It was at the very time of my first acquaintance with him that his determination was reached to undertake the dealing in works of art as his future occupation. He handed over his business, his tools, and his plant generally as an engraver, to his assistant, Mr. Pesoa, who continued the business; and it appears that this transfer was gratuitous on Avery's part—an instance of the liberality, the thinking of and for the interests of others, which was to be his peculiar characteristic. I cannot state exactly the date when he opened his offices or "Art Rooms" in the old building at the southeast corner of Fourth Street and Broadway, but here is a small item which may lead others to more immediately interesting information. A circular exists, dated December 19, 1864, in which S. P. Avery states that he "has opened an establishment for engravings and publishings and a general agency for the purchase and sale of fine oil-paintings and other works of art." This ven-

ture was made with the very especial moral support and approval of two of the boldest and wisest "picture-buyers" of the time, W. T. Walters of Baltimore and John Taylor Johnston of New York. Avery was the life-long friend of each of these two able men, as he was afterwards of William H. Vanderbilt: and there was something very attractive in the mutual respect that underlay those intimacies. My own acquaintance with W. T. Walters began when, in 1875, Avery brought him to my house to see what Japanese lacquers were like, for there were few to be seen in those days; and this little incident suggests the constant intercourse and constant discussion of collecting as an art which existed between those mutually helpful friends.

His business as a dealer in pictures was conducted on a rather limited scale for a couple of years and then, at the beginning of 1867, he sold at auction his private collection of oil paintings. The cause of this sale was announced to be his intended going to Europe; and this going to Europe was in connection with the then imminent Great Exposition of that year, the famous exposition which was the last successful enterprise of Napoleon III. To students of art it is more interesting in this respect that the Japanese exhibit there was the first general announcement to Europe and to the West of the vast and precious art collections of the Japanese nobles; collections which were, indeed, about to be broken

up, to be scattered abroad. The civil war which ended in the permanent establishment of the imperial power was immediately at hand, and the West was called upon to purchase the scattered possessions of the contestants and at the same time to reconstitute its whole theory of decorative art. Avery was one of the few who were ready to see, to welcome, and even to understand that revelation. Two or three of us were eager buyers, during 1865 and 1866, of every good scrap of lacquer-ware or yellow pottery that came our way, and Avery was a ready sympathizer. I remember well his words about fine old lacquer—"It is very satisfactory, isn't it?"—for that was true art criticism when coming from such a keen observer. The time for the study of Oriental paintings was not yet at hand—that was for a future period; but delicate and refined decorative art was shown to Europe at the Paris exposition as existing in a still artistic, a still working community of natural designers. It was to this great exposition of 1867 that Avery went as a commissioner or representative of the United States, and it was probably at that time and with the friendships made in that place, that his singularly close connection with many of the leading artists of his time was to take shape.

As for the sale itself, it was a curious collection of small pictures by Cropsey, S. R. Gifford, Gignoux, James and William Hart, Hubbard, Kensett, Lambdin, Whittredge and many others. It

seems that all of the then popular artists were there, those who are now forgotten and would be of small account if remembered, and those who, like McEntee and Inness, will be remembered always. Again there were represented artists who never were nor could be popular, but who were heartily admired by a little coterie of enthusiasts—such men as J. W. Hill and his son, John Henry Hill, and Charles Herbert Moore. At about the same time with this sale of paintings, there were sold also many of the curious books which Mr. Avery had collected; for I remember in his book-case a number of volumes which were little known to the every-day reader of that time, books which had been ardently recommended by Ruskin in his earlier writings—books which contained the enthusiastic and youthful-minded spirit of the England of those earlier days of pre-Raphaelitism and *The Germ*, the days of Gerald Massey's poems and of Charles Kingsley's revolutionary novels. The sale of the books was impressed upon me by a battle I had with the auctioneer, who, as the trick of his trade was then and is still, had insisted on abandoning the arrangement of the catalogue in order to get a number of volumes by a certain author under one number. I had protested at the sale, as wishing to buy a certain item which had been catalogued by itself, but the auctioneer pooh-poohed the application and sold all the books as one lot. I appealed to Mr. Avery the next morning, and he

went with me to the auctioneer's office, told them plainly that they were bound to follow the order of their catalogue, had the book taken out of its pile and the question asked me (not in Avery's presence) what I would give for it. In this way the book became mine, and I remember the little incident as an instance of the strong sense of justice which I never knew to fail in Avery's dealings with other men. What I notice is not so much a recognition of the fact that it was an inexcusable violation of the agreement, to alter the catalogue in that way; it is rather the ardent way in which he took it up as being a thing which was not merely to be regretted, but was to be cured at once.

His stay at Fourth Street and Broadway was not very long. He took the house at 88 Fifth Avenue in 1868 and after two or three years removed his business as a dealer in paintings to 86 Fifth Avenue, occupying the house next door, 88 Fifth Avenue, as his family residence, until his retirement from business in 1885. His fortune was made at this Fifth Avenue establishment and it is there that he perfected that singular alliance with the more enlightened rich men, the "picture-buyers" of the day, gaining little by little that reputation which made them so desire his advice in all cases where it could be supplied. As an illustration of this I would mention the earliest days of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, when John Taylor Johnston, the president, said to me,



the corresponding secretary, fellow member with him of the executive committee, that he should never be satisfied with that Board of Trustees until Avery was a member of it. The same opinion was expressed in different words and in a different way by William Tilden Blodgett, who, after Johnston, was the most active and respected "art patron" among the trustees of the first year. In fact it can never be known nor even guessed with any approximation to truth just how far the surprising success of many American buyers of paintings and other works of art was attributable to Avery.

And this leads naturally to a consideration of some of the remarkable traits which I think we may recognize as always prominent in Avery's life and practice. He was a man without talkativeness; without the disposition to give his opinion. Driven into a corner or talking confidentially with sufficient reason for free speech, and he might give a brief hint as to what he thought of a given subject, of a man of his own time, of a work of art which was up for consideration. But he almost never ventured his opinion and never, I think, cared to expatiate upon it, to insist upon it, to impress others with the righteousness of the view which he held. In other words he was eminently a person of practical results, and just as we never knew him rise to speak at any of the many hundred monthly dinners of art societies which he attended during thirty years,

so we never knew him to "take the floor" in a smaller or more informal gathering. He acted on his opinions as to men and as to pictures, but did not, I think, care to express them in words. One never heard him talk about national politics; but he was a convinced civil-service reformer, a member for many years of the well-known board; and it was as an old associate of George William Curtis that he announced himself when, in 1902, he founded the Curtis Medals for English oratory, in connection with Columbia University. Very lately, I think in the year 1902, I had occasion to wish for some general appreciation of a painting which I had never seen but which was under consideration—in fact it was the question whether it was worth while to take a journey to study it. This question being put before Avery, he was ready at once with his records of the past and his ascertained knowledge of the opinions of others, and also his settled opinion as to the work of art in question. I remember it as seeming to me a remarkable exception, and yet as I see it now it was not an exception, to the habit of his life as I have tried to state it here: for he would speak when there was sufficient occasion.

This indifference to the expression of his own opinion was accompanied by a general disposition to silence, which often stood him in good stead as dealer, as collector, as student of artistic tendencies. Persons who hardly knew him would think that he was lacking in candor, that his disposition

“to cover his tracks” was excessive; but it was not, I think, an unwillingness to let others see the material for his conclusions or to let others follow the course of his investigations—it was an instinctive disposition to act upon his gained knowledge and not to utilize it for discussion. Another man looking at modern painting as he looked at it, studying the works of the artistic engravers of his time as he studied them, taking occasional excursions into Chinese porcelains and Japanese metal work, and settling down in later life to the collecting of fine modern medallions, modern and ancient book-bindings and delicate Oriental enamels, would have printed monographs on special objects in his collections or would have read papers before literary and artistic clubs on the etchers of the United States or the book-binders of Paris. Avery’s disposition to study these things was not accompanied in any way by a desire to discuss them in words. Having at first a strong sense of the pecuniary value of works of art and a singularly acute instinct for the probable increase in such value, he bought with great skill and with much discrimination even at an early time; and bought at a later time with bold and extreme liberality. His purchases of the years before 1880 were often for sale. Very often these purchases were made, one thinks, with the purpose of immediate resale; this without considering, of course, the modern paintings which were his regular stock in trade. Sometimes he

would buy etchings or the like, and sell them if he could and even return them to France if the sale was not prompt; but those were early days. The opportunities which he would offer his friends to become possessors of precious early states of Whistler or Bracquemond, Meryon or Haden, will never return: but the market for such works of art was very limited before 1880 and it is probable that many such opportunities were lost because of limited means. But at a later time such opportunities were not often lost, and a singularly close observation of certain lines of manual art which he had made his special study, combined with liberality of expenditure, made him one of the most successful collectors of whom we have any record. He had a marvelously quick-acting and trustworthy instinct as to the pieces worth buying and the more numerous doubtful pieces.

It was to this facility and this boldness that the institutions which he loved and worked for owe so many and such precious treasures. He did not care to appear as a maker of heavy subscriptions, and when the millionaires put their names down for two thousand dollars apiece, Avery would appear with a subscription of two hundred and fifty: but what he did in a princely way was this—he would get together a collection of precious prints, of important books on a given subject, of Chinese snuff bottles carved in hard stones and in glass, of book-bindings, ancient as well as modern, of medallions struck and cast by

Roty, of American paintings; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History, The Grolier Club, the New York Public Library, the Architectural League of New York, or the Boston Museum of Fine Arts became the owner of some one of these, a most valuable gathering of rare and costly objects of singular importance to the perfecting of its collection. He knew well the value of the best writing about art, and his marvelous collection of modern prints as given to the Public Library included many books on line-engravings and wood-engravings, etching and lithography, with monographs on certain artists who were not always engravers. In addition to the gifts made in the name of S. P. Avery a collection of antique silver spoons of varied and beautiful character was given to the Metropolitan Museum of Art by Mrs. Avery, and, on the death of their daughter, Ellen Walters Avery, in 1893, her own collection of books was given to the Teachers College at Columbia University, and, with them, a certain number of valuable prints which are hung in a special room of the College. It would be one of the most interesting things possible for this little world of students and collectors centered in New York if an approximately complete list of these donations were to be made.

His connection with the Architectural League of New York was made stronger than it would otherwise have been, by the activity in that body

of his second son, Henry Ogden Avery. Henry was almost continually an officer—member of the executive council or the like—during those years when the League was making itself into an important and influential body. As a young man he had been my pupil (about 1869-71), and it was my frequent advice to his father to let him go to the Paris school. He went there about 1872 and for nearly seven years was a student connected more or less closely with the *Ecole des Beaux Arts*. My intimate acquaintance with him was renewed when I was president of the Architectural League, from 1889 to 1893; and so it was that when he died in 1890 his father came to me with the simple question, What had I better do to commemorate my son Henry? Would you advise the founding of a fellowship or of more fellowships than one? To this I answered that it had long been a dream of mine to found a society of a few persons willing to pay a large annual subscription, the purpose being to purchase those very costly books which every student should have access to, but which no one should be compelled to buy—the great work on classical sculpture which goes under the name of Heinrich Brunn; the magnificent folios on the sculpture of the Renaissance by Bode; the great series of volumes first begun by the Society of St. George and devoted to the Renaissance architecture of Tuscany—books of that sort which cost four hundred or five hundred dollars when

complete and which are also most troublesome to handle and house and most costly to bind in a proper way. As we talked about the scheme of founding such a library of reference, I said to Avery that I had dreamed of Columbia University as probably willing to give this library an alcove or a small room—to give it light and warmth and superintendence; and when Avery asked why Columbia University was named, I answered that it was because that library alone was open till a late hour in the evening and properly administered and cared for at that time most convenient for students. The question of cost came up at once, and at Avery's request I drew up a list of perhaps two hundred titles of the most costly books known to me on architecture and the kindred arts. I remember that the assumed price amounted to a little more than sixteen thousand dollars and I remember Avery's comment—"Twenty thousand dollars, then, would buy something worth having." The library was to cost him five times that sum.

This second interview ended in President Low's office, for we took a cab to the college buildings in Forty-ninth Street and laid the plan before the President. He made the point at once that the books would have to be given to the Trustees—that the title would have to be in them—but that in all other respects Mr. Avery might make his own regulations as to selection and as to the con-

ditions of use. The work of selection and purchase was taken in hand at once; a certain number of valuable books had belonged to Henry Avery and these were given as they stood, and the books on my list were purchased as rapidly as they could be found. A letter from Mr. Avery to the authorities of the University stated clearly the conditions of the gift, and this letter is printed in the catalogue-volume of the A. A. L.—as its founder loved to call it. Before many months had elapsed a fund was established, Avery having given fifteen thousand dollars to be invested, and it afforded a continuous income for the purchase of books. Thereafter the purchases were continued chiefly by the “Committee of Purchase” instituted by the deed of gift, according to which Samuel Avery and his wife established the Avery Library. This Committee of Purchase consisted, as it still consists, of the Librarian, the Professor of the Department of Architecture, and myself, my successor to be named by the two members *ex-officiis*. In addition to purchases made in this way, Mr. Avery was constantly sending valuable books to the library, and he was nearly always ready to respond to an application for some book which was beyond the means of the committee at that time. In this last-named way of accession some of the most precious books in the library were added to it, and I have letters from Avery in which he says plainly, in these or in similar words: “Now is your time; there is still



some money in the bank. Don't fail to send in your titles of needed books before it is all spent."

And that spontaneous way of giving was his, at all times. There was little need of asking his help—little to be gained by such asking; he knew what institution could best utilize his gift. Even as an almost infallible instinct told him what to buy, so a distinct sense of where the pleasure of right giving could be had, sent him straight to his beneficiary.

—Russell Sturgis, *Columbia University Quarterly*, December, 1904.

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SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY had been for nearly forty years one of the Century brotherhood, and none among us in that time more richly filled the constitutional qualification in his love of letters and of art. An old New Yorker, born here of New England parentage eighty-three years ago, he was closely and efficiently associated with a great number of the organizations for the enjoyment and promotion of these interests. In his youth he was an engraver on copper and on wood; then he became a publisher and illustrator, then a dealer and collector, and gradually a connoisseur, and was through all an intelligent and appreciative student and lover of art. It was through his agency and guidance that many of the fine private collections of this and other cities—notably those of the late Mr. Vanderbilt and Mr. Walters—were enriched, especially

in the line of the old Dutch masters and modern French landscape. His success in his profession—it may be called one—was due to his thoroughly trained judgment, his delicate and sure taste, and the courage of his convictions. He was himself a passionate but careful and systematic collector, and a most generous benefactor. His collection of some seventeen thousand prints, representing the labors of an ordinary lifetime, was given to the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden foundations. Columbia has what is probably the best architectural library in the country, given by him as a memorial of his son. The Teachers College received from him a valuable library in memory of a daughter. He gave many precious volumes to the Academy of Medicine. His Oriental Collection is in the Metropolitan Museum. He was a frequent contributor to the Century Club. In every organization of the many with which he was connected—the Metropolitan Museum, the Public Library, the Grolier Club, the Sculpture Society, the Civil Service Reform Association—he gave, with wonderful liberality, his counsel and aid, even more valuable than his other gifts. Quiet, modest, and retiring in his disposition, one needed to know him well to realize the breadth and refinement of his culture, the soundness and sureness of his judgment, the tenderness of his heart, the gentle firmness of his fidelity to high standards.

—Annual Report of the Century Association for the Year 1904,

## SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY

BY THEODORE L. DE VINNE

SAMUEL PUTNAM AVERY, the eldest son of Samuel P. and Hannah Parke Avery, was born in the city of New York on March 17, 1822. His father, of old New England stock (a descendant of Dr. William Avery who settled in 1650, at Dedham, Mass.), died during the cholera season of 1832, leaving his oldest son, then a boy but ten years old, with a brother and three sisters, to begin the struggle for existence. At a very early age he found employment in the office of a bank-note engraver, where he had opportunities to cultivate his inclination for the art of design. While yet a boy he began to fill in his spare time with engraving on wood, at which he soon became proficient. Abandoning engraving on copper and steel—an art then most difficult to enter as a master to one who was young in years and of slender purse—he undertook to make woodcuts for publishers and printers.

He entered this field too soon. Printing was then in a state of transition. The hand press was still used for the printing of woodcuts, but the pressmen who could properly print woodcuts were few in number. What was worse, the result of the financial panic of 1836, and of the great fire of 1835 were still felt, and New York printers had to be economical to the verge of penuriousness.

There were not many who could or would pay a proper price for a good design or engraving.

Orders for engraving did not come unsought. The positions of artist and printer were then reversed. The few illustrated books of merit then published like Harper's *Pictorial Bible* and Lossing and Barrett's *Field Book* were really planned by the artists, and were accepted by the publishers only after much importunity. The period between 1840 and 1850 was that of the comic almanac and the Dave Crockett picture book, the caricatured valentine and the coarsest kind of woodcut, and the outlook for a better appreciation of good prints was not encouraging.

During these dreary years of hard work and mean pay Mr. Avery was qualifying himself for better things. He studied with zeal and thoroughness the rules and principles that govern all kinds of good art and good workmanship. From the study of prints and painting he derived instruction of value. To know why some pictures and prints had been rising steadily in appreciation, while others after brief popularity had fallen into permanent neglect, was not to be ascertained by accepting the popular verdict. Nor was it safe to trust too much to the undefinable quality known as inherent good taste. He had to search for the many causes that helped to create meritorious work, to thoughtfully read the writings and patiently listen to the teachings of the critics of all ages and countries, had to be eager to hear and

slow to decide, had to critically compare the productions of many masters before he could make for himself just standards of proportion.

Many years passed before Mr. Avery met with proper recognition as a competent judge of pictures and prints. Mr. William T. Walters, a great collector, was the first to discern his fitness, and it was by his advice that Mr. Avery was induced to abandon engraving on wood and give exclusive attention to the purchase and sale of works of art. But when recognition did come, it was hearty and thorough. In 1867 he was appointed commissioner of the American Art Department at the Universal Exposition in Paris, where he made many friends among foreign artists. No man in America has done more to make Europeans acquainted with the works of American painters; and it is largely to his discernment that the picture galleries of recent collectors have been filled with works of permanent value. During the later years of his life he was accepted by all as a wise judge on all forms of artistic productions.

It is not, however, his expertness as a judge of pictures that need be considered in this paper. There is another phase of his character which will be more gratefully remembered. The spoken opinion given to-day is not always long remembered. The good deeds that outlast a man's lifetime and of which the visible evidences can be found for years to come in many libraries are the things that will be most kindly recalled. These

visible evidences are books and prints, for the books are, as the old Roman poet has well said, "more enduring than bronze." They live for centuries, and every year adds to their value, and in every generation new readers arise to thank the kind forethought that put them in easy reach.

One of the most valuable of these collections is that of the Avery Architectural Library at Columbia College, which comprises about 15,000 volumes, given with a proper endowment, by Mr. and Mrs. Avery in memory of their deceased son, the architect, Henry Ogden Avery. There is no collection like it in the New World. It is doubtful whether there is any as large, as accessible, and as generally useful in any library of Europe. Of equal merit is a great collection of prints and books on fine arts now in the Lenox Library; soon destined to become a part of the New York Public Library. Whoever examines the hand-book of this collection must be pleased not only at the diligence, but at the exceeding good taste of the collector, for here are prints of the best work of all the great engravers. Among them are old books relating to King Alfred of England and literary curiosities that one hardly dare mention for the temptation to expatiate on their merits would protract this paper beyond a reasonable length.

Visitors to the Metropolitan Museum of Art will find in the upper galleries a wonderful collection of Chinese and Japanese porcelains that were collected many years ago by Mr. Avery. They

exhibit not only the delicacy and beauty of Oriental art, but the patience and sagacity of the collector who picked them up, bit by bit, piece by piece, in many cities and from incongruous surroundings.

Nor has the Typothetæ (New York master printers) been neglected. Its scant collection of thirty years ago was materially enriched by the bequest of the late William C. Martin, and additions have been made by many of its members, but no one has been a more frequent or more helpful contributor than Mr. Avery.

It is many years since Mr. Avery retired from active business, but his diligence as a member of literary and civic associations never abated. To enumerate these societies is to show the many-sidedness of the man. He was one of the founders and always a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, for many years secretary of the art committee of the Union League Club, trustee of the New York Library Association (Astor, Lenox and Tilden foundations), ex-president of The Grolier Club, vice-president of the Sculpture Society, honorary member of the Architectural League and of the Typothetæ of the City of New York, and corresponding member of many foreign artistic societies. He was a member of the Century, Union League, Players, City, Tuxedo and other clubs; a member of the Civil Service Reform Association, Sons of the Revolution, and of the Society of Colonial Wars; life member of the New York Genealogical and Biographical So-

ciety, and of the American Museum of Natural History; member of the American Geological, Historical and Zoological Societies, of the National Academy of Design and the Chamber of Commerce.

The new charter of the City of New York specially appointed him a member of the Art Commission which has to decide upon the merits of all statues and mural paintings offered to the city. This is the least of many evidences that his opinion in all matters pertaining to fine arts is considered as authoritative. His services in this direction, as well as his active interest in the cause of education, fairly earned for him the degree of A.M., given some years ago by Columbia College.

These are evidences of ability and activity, and yet they do not fully represent the man. One may grow old, may acquire distinction and property, and yet be comparatively friendless; but Mr. Avery is not only honored but beloved in his declining years. On his seventy-fifth birthday, March, 1897, a gold medal of artistic design, modeled by Professor Scharff of Vienna, was presented to him by seventy-five leading citizens of New York. This was one way of recognizing his public services, as well as their appreciation of him as a man. Victor G. Brenner of New York has also made a portrait medalion of Mr. Avery. One of the last works of Thomas Johnson, the engraver, was an etching of the portrait of "his beloved friend, S. P. Avery."



One of Mr. Avery's hobbies was the collection of fine books in fine bindings. Friendships that he had formed abroad in artistic and literary circles had made him acquainted with foragers of keener discrimination than are usually found among dealers in old books, and they have helped to add to his collection. To go through his library is an education in bindings. One will find there specimens of the best work of the oldest Italian and the most modern French, German and English binders. From the stamped missal of vellum, with silver clasps, and the carved ivory covers of medieval craftsmen, down to the carved leather and the brilliant mosaic inlays of Pagnant, one may find excellent examples of the handiwork of able decorators of books for more than seven centuries.

Mr. Avery's death was unexpected. He had "grown old gracefully," and retained his activity and usefulness to the last, even to marching in procession on some recent day of festival with his fellow soldiers of the 23d Regiment. For years it had been his custom to spend the summer with an invalid wife at Lake Mohonk. He left that place with a daughter to transact some business in this city, and to go on to Atlantic City where he hoped that sea air would be of benefit, but a sudden attack of illness compelled him to stop at his home, 4 East Thirty-eighth Street, where he steadily declined until he died August 11, 1904.

In acknowledgment of a written tribute of love

paid to his memory by his associates of The Grolier Club, Mrs. Avery testifies with earnestness to the unvarying sweetness and serenity of her husband's disposition during a union which lasted more than sixty years. He never spoke ill of anyone even when he had just cause. He did try to be a peace maker as well as a benefactor.

Mr. Avery's survivors are his widow, Mary Ann Ogden, a son, Samuel P. Avery, Jr., who, until recently, succeeded his father in the control of a picture gallery on Fifth Avenue, and a daughter, the wife of the Rev. M. P. Welcher of Brooklyn. Benjamin Parke Avery, his only brother, was Minister to China under President Grant, and died at Pekin in 1875. A sister married the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage and died in 1861.

At his funeral, a young man made this remark, "I have lost my best friend. Every month, and sometimes oftener, I was sure to receive from Mr. Avery a note, inclosing kind words, a newspaper clipping, or dainty little gifts, all tending to show that I was loved and remembered." And an eminent artist, now living abroad said to the writer who told him of Mr. Avery's death, "The world to me will never seem the same again."

—The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record, January, 1905.

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**S**AMUEL PUTNAM AVERY, one of the original Trustees of the Museum, died on August 11, 1904, after thirty-four years of continuous service.

## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were adopted by the Trustees:

The early founders of the Metropolitan Museum of Art have nearly all passed away. Presidents Johnston, Marquand and Rhinelanders have gone over to the majority. It now becomes our painful duty to record upon our minutes the death of our late associate and friend, Samuel Putnam Avery.

Mr. Avery was a member of the first board of trustees of the Museum and was, until his death, one of its most useful, active and intelligent members. He brought to the service of the Museum a large experience in the world of art, a mind enriched by travel and trained by the observation and study of the world's famous collections. His conscientious devotion to all his duties was remarkable. His business brought him in frequent contact with the great painters of the last half century, both at home and abroad, and many of the best works of foreign masters passed through his hands. After his retirement from business his activity was continued in the several public institutions in which he was a hard-working trustee.

The Vanderbilt collection of pictures now on exhibition in our galleries was made by the late William H. Vanderbilt, who was a generous and intelligent collector. Mr. Vanderbilt very wisely called to his aid the expert assistance of Mr. Avery. Mr. Avery was also a most discriminating collec-

tor of porcelains, bronzes, and other art objects, and of fine books. His library was small but choice, and was rich in bindings, executed by the famous bibliopagists of the present and former times. It is probable that Mr. Avery's name will be best known and longest remembered by reason of his extraordinary liberality (often concealed from public observation) both to individuals and institutions. A large proportion of the books, prints, bronzes, etc., in The Grolier Club, were presented by him. In nearly all of the art clubs of the city will be found mementos of his thoughtful consideration, and his gifts were not confined to this city alone. This Museum is indebted to Mr. Avery for a valuable collection of medals by Roty, and a large number of paintings and art objects, and he was a constant contributor to its library. In Mrs. Avery's name he enriched the Museum with a large collection of rare and valuable antique silver spoons.

The bequest to the New York Public Library of 17,000 etchings, a collection representing the patient and intelligent work of forty years, shows how catholic Mr. Avery was in selecting art treasures and how thoughtful he was for the public welfare in distributing them during his lifetime. In memory of a daughter who died in 1893 Mr. Avery established a library in the Teachers' College, giving his daughter's books, to which he added many others.

The crowning glory of Mr. Avery's beneficence

## EDITORIALS AND RESOLUTIONS

is the architectural library presented to Columbia University in memory of his son, Henry Ogden Avery, a talented young architect. This library is said, upon good authority, to be one of the best in this country on this special subject.

Mr. Avery was a friend to all good men. His regard for those favored with his intimate acquaintance will always be a fragrant memory. An hour spent in his company among the many attractive objects in his private library was serenely enjoyable. He was a man of the highest ideals, who placed character above all other attainments. As a well deserved recognition of his long and disinterested service, a few friends presented him with a gold medal on his seventy-fifth birthday.

His example will remain an inspiration for good deeds. He has made the world better worth living in for those who come after him.

J. PIERPONT MORGAN,  
President,  
Metropolitan Museum of Art.

RUTHERFURD STUYVESANT	JNO. CROSBY BROWN
WM. L. ANDREWS	JNO. L. CADWALADER
JOHN BIGELOW	H. C. FAHNESTOCK
CHAS. STEWART SMITH	EDWARD D. ADAMS
ROBERT W. DEFOREST	GEO. A. HEARN
WHITELAW REID	WM. CHURCH OSBORN
ELIHU ROOT	FREDERICK DIELMAN
JNO. S. KENNEDY	CHAS. F. MCKIM
D. O. MILLS	DANIEL C. FRENCH

—Thirty-fifth annual report of the trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1905.

ON the 11th of August last, there died in New York an eminent collector, Mr. Samuel Putnam Avery, one of the trustees of the New York Public Library. Mr. Frank Weitenkampf, curator of the Print Department of that important depository, has been kind enough to send us the following necrology:

Born March 17, 1822, Mr. Samuel Putnam Avery, originally an engraver on wood and subsequently a picture dealer, became one of the most noted bibliophiles and amateurs in the United States.

He was one of the first to collect Whistler's etchings; similarly, he sought out the etchings of Daubigny when they were selling at two or three francs apiece in the old book shops on the quais. His enlightened taste, his artist acquaintances, his collector's scent for the unique or rare and curious piece, enabled him to form a collection of etchings of the nineteenth century which amounts to about fifteen thousand plates, without counting the three thousand lithographs which he had collected in his portfolios. Flameng, Jacque, Bracquemond, Rajon, Buhot and other great artists are admirably represented in the portfolios of Mr. Avery, who also possessed the only complete collection extant of Mauve's etchings. His series of the *Liber Studiorum* of Turner was one of the finest in the world.

Mr. Samuel Putnam Avery generously gave his wonderful collection of prints to the New York

Public Library; in Columbia University he founded a magnificent architectural library, in memory of his son Henry Ogden Avery, a talented architect.

He did not possess only prints; he had also collected superb bindings signed by American and French master-binders. In one of them, executed for Th. Deck's work on faience, there are placed panels of faience by that skillful ceramist. All these bindings are described in the catalogue of an exhibition held in 1903 in the Library of Columbia University. Mr. Samuel Putnam Avery was a member of The Grolier Club, the Society of Iconophiles, and many other artistic associations. The lamented trustee of the New York Public Library, whose taste was of the most perfect, was an authority in matters of art, whose personality inspired the profound respect of his compatriots, and who is held in affectionate remembrance by his friends.

—Bulletin du Bibliophile, Paris, December 15, 1904, p. 690.

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THERE are many kinds of bibliophiles, each with its special vagary, but the one to which Mr. Avery belonged is the rarest of them all—the altruistic.

His library at the time of his death was not large, because he was a constant giver of books. It represented only the undistributed remnant.

Not only to The Grolier Club, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Architectural Library of

SAMUEL P. AVERY

Columbia College—which was so dear to his heart—was he continually giving books, engravings, etchings, but even institutions at a distance which had no possible claim upon him, were enriched by his gifts.

He was a modest, courteous, generous, kindly gentleman of the old school, a public-spirited merchant, an ideal bibliophile.

—Extract from the fourth year book of The Bibliophile Society, Boston, Mass., May 1905.









**This book is under no circumstances to be taken from the Building**

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